

Mr. Speaker, it is a simple fact of life that the home health care industry is very time and labor intensive. There are ways to restructure an agency's operations to make care-giving more efficient, but at a certain point, one cannot go any further without impacting the quality of care the patient receives.

In Ocean County, New Jersey—which is home to the greatest concentration of senior citizens in New Jersey—home health care agencies may only receive enough resources to provide as few as 30 visits per patient. The situation in Mercer, Burlington, and Monmouth counties is much the same: all will see an arbitrary capping of reimbursement for home care visits no matter the patient's condition. If New Jersey patients require, on average, more visits per patient than Medicare will reimburse, the quality of the care they receive could be jeopardized and an agency that is forced to continue providing uncompensated care will eventually risk bankruptcy.

The IPS is troubling for another reason: as initially implemented, the IPS gives providers a perverse incentive to avoid treating critically ill, chronic, or more expensive patients. Unlike a fully implemented prospective payment system (PPS), the Interim Payment System (IPS) makes no attempt to distinguish between agencies that are simply inefficient and agencies that are treating a disproportionately sicker patient population.

Our bill mitigates the damage set in motion by the IPS and will restore at least 60% of the reimbursement cuts announced January 1, 1998. To preserve the quality of medically necessary care for our seniors, our legislation mandates two changes to the IPS.

First, our bill will allow home health care agencies to use calendar year 1994—rather than fiscal year 1994—cost data as the base year upon which visits and reimbursement rates are derived. This distinction may seem technical but it is extremely important for states like New Jersey which do not run on the same fiscal year as the federal government. The practical result of the IPS fiscal year requirement is that it forces NJ home health agencies to use earlier base year data (1993) when complying with the IPS. The older the data, the greater the gap between the IPS settings and the actual needs in 1998. Older data also glosses over the growing trend to move patients out of acute care settings and into home health care programs. The IPS program should be based on the most recent, practical, data.

The second provision contained in our bill will protect home health agencies from a hidden cut in the Medicare home health reimbursement. Under the guise of "freezing" certain costs and prohibiting adjustments for inflation, the IPS actually goes beyond merely capping or "freezing" home health cost limits—it reduces total per-patient payments, too. If left unchanged, this "so-called" freeze provision will not only cut the anticipated inflation costs, but go below current per-patient reimbursements as well. To address this, HR 3108 requires HCFA to factor in medical inflation in IPS calculations.

Mr. Speaker, when HCFA first announced its changes to the Medicare coverage of home health care I sent a letter signed by the entire NJ Congressional Delegation to Nancy-Ann Min DeParle, the Director of HCFA, outlining three major problems with the IPS and asking that the agency not implement its proposal

until the formula was corrected. While one of our concerns has been addressed, the remaining inequities have not. I urge my colleagues to act swiftly on this legislation and move to protect homebound Medicare patients who are now at risk.

THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 1998

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to my colleagues' attention my monthly newsletter on foreign affairs from January 1998 entitled *The International Monetary Fund*.

I ask that this newsletter be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

The newsletter follows:

THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

The chaos of the Great Depression, which led to the Second World War convinced American leaders that economic crises were key sources of international conflict. Presidents Roosevelt and Truman took the lead in creating postwar institutions to help stabilize economies, improve living standards, and promote peace. One of the most important of these is the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Though not perfect, the IMF is vital to U.S. interests today.

The IMF's purpose is to promote a stable international financial environment, a prerequisite for expanding trade and economic growth. The IMF gives financial advice to member countries. When countries have trouble balancing their books, the IMF provides loans in exchange for policy reforms. The typical IMF prescription calls for spending cuts, higher interest rates, and market-oriented reforms.

IMF loans come primarily from the pooled contributions of the Fund's 182 member countries. Each country's contribution, or "quota," is linked to the size of its economy, and quota shares equal IMF voting shares. Because important IMF decisions require an 85% majority vote, the U.S. voting share of 18% gives us a veto over decisions we oppose.

Contributions to the IMF have never cost U.S. taxpayers a cent. When the IMF uses the funds we provide, it gives us an interest-earning claim in return. U.S. contributions must be authorized by Congress, but they have no impact on the federal budget, and they do not require any spending.

The most recent U.S. quota contribution to the IMF, valued at \$11.9 billion, occurred in 1992. Last year, IMF members agreed to another quota increase. The U.S. share would be about \$14.5 billion. Two dozen IMF members, including the U.S., have also agreed to make additional funds available in an extraordinary crisis. The proposed \$3.5 billion U.S. contribution to this emergency credit line would require a budgetary outlay only if these funds were used and not paid back. The President will ask Congress to approve both IMF funding requests later this year.

U.S. interests. The IMF serves U.S. interests in many ways. First, it promotes stability and prosperity by helping countries work through economic difficulties. Second, the IMF helps sustain an international environment conducive to trade expansion and economic growth, which reduces poverty and creates profitable markets for U.S. exports and investment. Third, the IMF's loan condi-

tions usually require countries to adopt free-market reforms, which make them better trade and investment partners. Fourth, the IMF distributes the burden of stabilizing the international economy and responding to crises—a task that might otherwise fall to the U.S. alone.

For reasons of our own security and prosperity, it is not in the U.S. interest for the economies of our trading partners to collapse. The IMF uniquely possesses the policy expertise and resources to help avert economic collapse and keep the international financial system running smoothly. If the IMF didn't exist, we'd have to create it.

Criticism and changing roles. The IMF has long been a target of criticism. One leading criticism is that the reform conditions often attached to IMF loans—sharp budget cuts, for example—cause a lot of economic pain and do nothing to improve environmental, labor, or human rights conditions. The IMF could be more sensitive to the economic and social consequences of its reform prescriptions, but it is usually a country's economic "disease," not the IMF "cure," that causes most of the pain. Countries receiving IMF support have a tough enough time implementing required financial reforms. Asking them to achieve additional objectives during a crisis could make the crisis unmanageable. Furthermore, economic stability and growth will, over time, tend to improve environmental, labor, and human rights conditions.

A second criticism holds that the IMF shouldn't bail out those who make bad decisions. An expectation that the IMF will step in during an emergency will make investors and governments more careless, increasing the risk of future crises. IMF and U.S. officials agree that new strategies are needed to ensure that investors and creditors bear more risk for bad judgments.

A third and related criticism holds that we are better off doing nothing—letting markets clear. Market forces are beneficial, but they can swing to extremes. Too much is at risk to let markets alone resolve problems of financial instability. We recognized long ago that institutions such as the Federal Reserve System, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation protect the economy from the excesses of the market. Failing to mount an international bailout could inflict great economic pain on a lot of innocent citizens. A crisis in a major U.S. export market could cost many U.S. jobs.

A fourth criticism is that the IMF sometimes helps developing countries—such as those now in crisis in Asia—that compete aggressively with U.S. exports and labor. Yet withholding emergency support would only aggravate a country's crisis, further reducing the value of its currency. That would hurt U.S. exports and intensify the threat to U.S. workers posed by imports.

Finally, critics blame the IMF for failing to predict or prevent financial crises. The IMF says its effectiveness is hampered by countries that conceal bad economic data. To address this problem, the U.S. and other key IMF members are pressing for tough new disclosure standards.

U.S. policy. The U.S. can do several things to strengthen the IMF. First, Congress should approve the President's funding requests for the IMF, because its resources have been depleted by the Asian crises. Second, the U.S. must take the lead in strengthening the international financial system and creating an architecture to prevent and better manage financial crises. We need to ensure that investors and creditors pay a price for their mistakes, consistent with our broader interest in preventing economic catastrophes. IMF member countries must also be required to provide more accurate, detailed, and timely economic data. Third, the

IMF needs to give social and economic considerations greater weight in lending decisions. Finally, the IMF's largely secretive mode of operating needs to be more accountable, transparent, and open to public scrutiny.

Conclusion. The United States took the lead in creating the IMF. It has served U.S. interests for a half century. It is not perfect, and it can be improved. Yet its contribution to international financial stability, economic growth, and world peace is immense. It deserves U.S. support.

MINORITY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

HON. WILLIAM (BILL) CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 1998

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to share information about an important scholarship program for minority students that has been established by the Army Research Laboratory.

The Science and Technology Academic Recognition System (STARS) fellowship provides tuition and expenses for the senior year of undergraduate study, and two years of graduate study. This program targets undergraduates who attend historically black colleges and universities and other minority serving institutions, but recipients may pursue graduate studies at any accredited university. Fellowship recipients are employed by the Army Research Laboratory during the Summer and other school breaks throughout the academic year. The awards can total up to \$100,000 over the course of three years. In 1997, the Army Research Laboratory committed \$300,000 to three STARS fellowship recipients.

While STARS funds only undergraduate and Master's degrees, the Army Research Laboratory has other fellowships which can help students complete doctoral studies. Upon completion of the STARS program, graduates are free to stay on with the Army Research Laboratory or they can pursue work in other parts of the federal government.

In order to become eligible for the STARS program students must have a 3.0 grade point average, be rising seniors, hold U.S. citizenship and have an interest in pursuing graduate study in science, engineering or mathematics. Interested students should write to Director, U.S. Army Research Laboratory, ATTN: AMSRL-SP, 2800 Powder Mill Road, Adelphi, Maryland, 20783.

RONALD REAGAN NATIONAL AIRPORT

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 1998

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, Ronald Reagan's legacy is the end of the Cold War and the greatest economic expansion in United States history. He ended the outrageous income tax rate of 70% and simplified the tax system with the 1986 Tax Act. He nominated the best Federal Reserve Chairman in history,

Alan Greenspan and forced the Soviet Union to make massive nuclear reductions through his "peace through strength" plan.

Ronald Reagan presided over eight years of peace and prosperity. He was a great governor, presiding over my home state of California, and a great President. He exalted the rights and dignity of the individual and preached that government must be the servant, not the master of its citizens. Ronald Reagan is a great American and he deserves to be recognized.

Earlier this week, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee passed a resolution to rename Washington National Airport the Ronald Reagan National Airport in order to honor Reagan prior to his 86th birthday. I was shocked to learn that this legislation did not pass unanimously, but by a lopsided vote of 39-28. Democrats are actually openly opposing this bill to honor one of our nation's greatest leaders.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution recognizes the one man who likely made the greatest impact of any human being on our lives. This bill should not be made into a political agenda item by the Democrats. When Ronald Reagan took the oath of office, the United States economy was in the midst of its worst recession since World War II. Big government ruled at home and abroad and the U.S. government had income tax rates as high as 70%. President Ronald Reagan changed the direction of the country and I applaud my colleague, BOB BARR, for introducing and fighting for this measure.

A PIONEER FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY EDUCATION

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 1998

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Ms. Speaker, It gives me great pleasure to rise to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of Mr. Pat Tornillo, who has played a major leadership role in Miami-Dade's public school system for almost four decades.

As chief negotiator for Dade County's teachers since 1963, Mr. Tornillo is widely credited for raising the salaries of Miami's teachers to the among the highest level in the nation. Pat has also won numerous benefits and professional initiatives that have given our area's teachers a wide variety of opportunities for growth and professionalism. He is recognized nationally for his progressive and innovative work in the professionalization of teaching and educational reform in South Florida.

Pat came to Miami in 1956 from the Newark, New Jersey school system. As a new teacher in the Miami-Dade County school system, he soon became active in the Dade County Classroom Teachers Association (which later became the United Teachers of Dade). He presently serves as Executive Director of the United Teachers of Dade, President of the Florida Education Association/United and Vice President of the American Federation of Teachers.

He has been a pioneer in blazing a trail for quality education in the Southeast. He helped build our local school system into one of the largest and most culturally diverse public

school systems in the nation. He has won many awards for this record including the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Brotherhood Award, the Outstanding Leadership Award from the United Way, and the NAACP Distinguished Award.

As a former Dade County educator, I am happy to join with his many friends and colleagues who will pay tribute to him at a major event in his honor on February 7th. This event, "A Gathering of Eagles, honoring Pat L. Tornillo, for his Uncommon Commitment to Public Education", is a fitting commemoration of the record of one of Florida's leading educators.

IN TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF JAMES ROBERTS OF ANDREWS, TX

HON. LARRY COMBEST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 1998

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life and achievements of James Roberts of Andrews, Texas.

James Roberts was a very important reason that the county and community of Andrews lived up to its self-proclaimed truism, "A Community of Quality." James embodied every bit of that quality as the local boy who grew up to take an active, important part in his community. After graduation from Andrews High School, he completed his education after serving this country in the U.S. Army in World War II and bravely surviving a year's time in a German prisoner-of-war camp. He returned home to Andrews and married Marie Holman on April 18, 1946. He had attended Texas Tech in Lubbock, and in 1950, earned his college degree from Baylor University.

James became the owner and editor of the Andrews County News. His writing spoke with the strong, common sense voice and views of the vast West Texas and Eastern New Mexico region through several newspapers under the Roberts Publishing banner. The family paper, founded by his parents during the Great Depression, carried James' own "Drifting Sands" column of homespun humor and down-to-earth basics of daily life and politics, James Roberts' own course in life was anything but drifting. James was an important and thoughtful local leader, one of the community's strongest boosters.

As the president of the Andrews Industrial Foundation, he attracted Fortune 500 businesses to Andrews, to diversify an economy once dependent on financial fluctuations in the domestic oil industry. James Roberts was also a leader among newspaper editors and publishers throughout the state, serving as president of the Texas Press Association and the West Texas Press Association. With strong community ties, a member of the First Baptist Church, two terms as president of the Andrews Chamber of Commerce, and the 12-year presidency of the Permian Basin Railroad Company, it is no surprise that James had earned early recognition as Andrews' Outstanding Citizen.

Just a few days before Christmas, James Roberts passed from this life—a life of community service for the betterment of his neighbors. Mr. Speaker, I believe that Andrews,